

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NATO 06476 062041Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM USMISSION NATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4653

C O N F I D E N T I A L NATO 06476

EXDIS

STATE PLEASE PASS TO SECDEF

FOR SECRETARY BROWN FROM AMBASSADOR BENNETT

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: APER, AORG, NATO
SUBJ: REPLACEMENT FOR ASYG (DS) WALTER B. LABERGE

1. YOU WILL RECALL OUR CONVERSATION IN OTTAWA AND THE EMPHASIS I PUT THERE ON THE NEED FOR A TIMELY AND ABLE SUCCESSOR TO WALTER LABERGE, NATO'S ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL FOR DEFENSE SUPPORT. I KNOW YOU HAVE TAKEN A PERSONAL INTEREST IN THIS POSITION, WHICH IS SO IMPORTANT TO OUR WORK ON THE PRESIDENT'S NATO INITIATIVES. ALAS, TIME RUSHED ON APACE AND LABERGE LEAVES HERE JULY 11 FOR HIS CONFIRMATION HEARINGS AND WILL PROBABLY BE TAKING UP HIS ARMY DEPT DUTIES IN EARLY AUGUST. I UNDERSTAND THERE HAVE BEEN DISAPPOINTMENTS IN FINDING A SUCCESSOR, BUT I AM INCREASINGLY CONCERNED OVER THE SUBSTANTIVE GAP WE ARE FACING IN THIS ABSOLUTELY KEY POST. I UNDERSTAND THAT, IF THE CURRENT CANDIDATE WERE TO ACCEPT YOUR OFFER THIS WEEK, SOME 30 DAYS WOULD THEN BE REQUIRED TO PROCESS HIM THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND TO ENSURE
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THAT HE ARRIVED WITH REQUISITE CLEARANCES. HE WOULD STILL NEED SEVERAL ADDITIONAL WEEKS TO ENABLE HIM TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH HIS RESPONSIBILITIES, MANY OF WHICH ARE BASIC TO TIME-SENSITIVE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF SEVERAL OF THE NATO SUMMIT INITIATIVES AND TO HIS CENTRAL ROLE IN THE NATO AEW PROGRAM.
2. LABERGE HAS CARVED OUT AN IMPRESSIVE NICHE FOR HIMSELF

HERE, BASED ON HIS HIGH TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES, HIS
FOCUS ON POSITIVE JOB ACCOMPLISHMENT, AND HIS EFFECTIVE
PERSONAL MANNER WITH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL
OFFICIALS ALIKE. IN BRIEF, HE IS A HARD MAN TO REPLACE.

3. I HOPE YOU WILL BEAR WITH THIS PERSONAL APPEAL TO GIVE
THIS MATTER A SHOVE TO EXPEDITE THE CHOICE, PERHAPS BY
LIMITING THE TIME FOR SERIATIM CONSIDERATION BY
INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES. WE WOULD LIKE TO PROVIDE A
NOMINATION TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL BY 15 JULY, IF
AT ALL POSSIBLE.BENNETT

NOTE BY OCT: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEE.

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Message Attributes

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